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THE CHALLENGE OF

ZORRO



All but two know him as . . .

Don Diego, an over-dressed dandy on a royal mission. But, to fight injustice, he dons his mask, and becomes —



ZORRO!

There are others who wear masks, too—masks of deception. There is MARIA BOURBON—a striking image of the KING OF SPAIN—but is she really his sister? And what of THE KING—a sick monarch—or is he? Is his illness somehow linked with the activities of Gratos, de Roca and Dr. Aristola—his trusted confidants? This is the web—a web of intrigue—that only the flashing sword of ZORRO can slice through!



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THE CHALLENGE OF ZORRO



IN ALTA, CALIFORNIA, AN UNMARKED COACH RACES TO THE GREAT CASA OF THE VEGAS, ITS BLINDS OF DARK WOOD SLIGHTLY...

NO ONE IS
WATCHING! YOU
CAN LEAVE THE
COACH NOW!



KEEPING TO THE SHADOWS, THE MYSTERIOUS
WOMAN HURRIES ON...



YOUR LETTER PLEADED
FOR HELP! BUT I DO
NOT KNOW ANY
SEÑORITA GOMEZ!

ONCE I LIFT MY
VEIL, DON ALEJANDRO,
YOU WILL KNOW
WHOSE SISTER I AM!



DIEGO!

YES, FATHER! I SEE IT! SHE'S THE ABSOLUTE IMAGE OF HIS MAJESTY!



SENORS, YOUR NAME HERE CARRIES GREAT PROTECTION! THAT IS WHY I APPEALED TO YOU! THE KING IS REPORTED DYING! HIS COUSIN WILL SUCCEED HIM UNLESS YOU HELP ME REACH SPAIN AND GAIN MY RIGHTFUL THRONE!



YOUR THRONE--

--SI! MY TRUE NAME IS MARIA BOURBON! I AM HIS MAJESTY'S TWIN SISTER!



BUT NO ONE--

--EVER KNEW HE HAD ONE! THAT IS PRECISELY HOW IT WAS SUPPOSED TO BE! WHEN I WAS BORN, MINUTES AFTER MY ROYAL BROTHER, I WAS HURRIED FROM MY MOTHER'S PALACE CHAMBER! I WAS BROUGHT HERE AND RAISED FAR FROM SPAIN!



AS YOU KNOW, BY THE LAW OF CASTILE AND LEON, THE FIRSTBORN WHETHER MALE OR FEMALE MAY RULE! SO RATHER THAN RISK HAVING MY PRESENCE CAUSE SOME FACTIONS TO SPREAD THE CLAIM THAT I WAS BORN FIRST, WHILE OTHERS WOULD HOLD FOR MY BROTHER AND THUS CREATE CONTINUAL UNREST, MY BIRTH WAS KEPT SECRET!



I--IT IS ASTOUNDING--AS ASTOUNDING AS YOUR RESEMBLANCE TO THE KING! BUT DO YOU HAVE ANY PROOF?

SI! ENOUGH TO CONVINCE ANYONE THAT I AND NOT MY COUSIN SHOULD RULE SPAIN!



FIRST--

--THE ROYAL BIRTHMARK! EVERY-
ONE KNOWS HIS MAJESTY HAS A
RED CRESCENT EXACTLY WHERE
YOURS IS! QUITE AMAZING--AND
CURIOUS!



THIS LETTER CONFIRMS
YOUR STORY! AND THE
SEAL IS THE ROYAL
ONE, I RECOGNIZE IT!



MY BROTHER STILL WEARS
THE OTHER HALF!



THE DOCTOR, WHO
BROUGHT ME INTO THIS
WORLD IS DEAD, BUT
HE WROTE THIS AND IT
WAS SENT ALONG
WITH ME!



MY MOTHER, JUST
BEFORE THEY
CARRIED ME AWAY
FROM HER FOREVER,
GAVE ME HALF OF
A LOCKET--



YO - YOUR
MAJESTY--

--FROM THE WAY YOU ADDRESS
ME, I SEE I HAVE WON LOYAL
SUPPORTERS! I SHALL NEED
THE HELP OF A DARING MAN
TO ESCORT ME TO SPAIN!



WE ARE HONORED! BUT MY FATHER IS TOO OLD AND I-I, AS THEY SAY, AM TOO YOUNG TO DIE! IF YOUR COUSIN KNOWS OF YOUR EXISTENCE, NOW, WHILE HIS MAJESTY IS DYING, WOULD BE THE PERFECT TIME TO GET RID OF YOU-- AND WHOEVER IS WITH YOU!



BUT IF YOU SUCCEED, DIEGO, YOU'LL RECEIVE HONORS, AKAPOALS AND RIBBONS TO WEAR, PERHAPS THE ORDER OF CALATRAYA.



NO! NO! NOT THE RIBBON OF THE ORDER OF CALATRAYA--IT IS RED AND I DON'T LOOK GOOD WITH RED! BUT WHY NOT THE ORDER OF THE GOLD FLEECE? YELLOW IS MUCH MORE FLATTERING TO ME!



IF WE ARRIVE SAFELY IN SPAIN, ONCE I SUCCEED MY BROTHER--THAT RIBBON SHALL BE YOURS!



YOUR MAJESTY, I CANNOT RESIST FINE RIBBONS!-- AND I HAVE THE PERFECT LADY-IN-WAITING FOR YOUR SEA VOYAGE!



THE NEXT DAY, FIRST SWEARING HER TO SECRECY, DIEGO TELLS HIS FIANCÉE RANCHA OF HIS PLANS....





AH, PACHITA, WHAT A NARROW VIEW YOU TAKE! WE DO KNOW HIS MAJESTY IS EXTREMELY SICK AND RUMORED DYING-- IF SHE SUCCEEDS HER BROTHER, WHAT REWARD WOULD BE MORE FITTING THAN A ROYAL WEDDING?

I-- IN THE ROYAL PALACE?



NATURALLY! BUT SINCE YOU'RE NOT INTERESTED --

-- WAIT! DESO, I'LL SAIL WITH HER MAJESTY AS A LADY-IN-WAITING! MORE ONCE WE'RE IN SPAIN, MY LADY-WAITING WILL BE OVER!



TWO DAYS LATER...

THIS TRIP WILL CALL FOR COURAGE-- BUT THAT WILL BE SUPPLIED! THE SWORD OF ZORRO IS GONE!



I'LL HAVE DUST ALL OVER MY LIMBS, BERNARDO, BUT KEEP TO THE BACK ROADS TILL WE REACH THE PORT!

SI, DON DESO!



PACHITA, YOU ARE STARRING!

I-- I STILL CAN'T GET OVER HER BEARING RESEMBLANCE TO HIS MAJESTY!



PING!





BUT WE WILL DEFEY THEIR
THREATS! WE WILL SAIL!
AND I SHALL BURN THEIR
ARROGANT NOTE--

--NO, YOUR
MAJESTY!
PERMIT ME TO
KEEP IT AS A
TREASURED
SOUVENIR!



THE LONG SEA VOYAGE PASSES UNEVENTFULLY
UNTIL THEY ARE A DAY FROM SPAIN.

SAIL HO!



SHE'S FLYING A YELLOW PENNANT I'VE
NEVER SEEN! BUT I CAN SEE SHE'S ARMED!



THAT YELLOW
FLAG MEANS
SHE IS THE SHIP
THAT IS TO
MEET ME!

WHAT? NO SHIP'S STOPPING
MINE AT SEA! NOT WITH
THE VALUABLE CARGO
I'M CARRYING!



BUT, CAPTAIN, THEY
ONLY WANT TO TAKE
ME ON BOARD SO
I CAN LAND AT A
SECRET AND SAFE--

IT'S A BRICK! YOU'RE
TRAVELING ON MY SHIP
TO TRICK ME INTO
COMING ALONGSIDE
HER SO THEY CAN
BOARD AND ROB ME!



OPEN THE
GUNPORTS!



DON DIEGO, STOP HIM!
HE MUST BE IN THE PAY OF
MY ENEMIES! THAT'S WHY
HE WON'T LET ME TRANSFER
TO THE OTHER SHIP! HE
WANTS TO TAKE ME TO A PORT
WHERE I'LL BE SEIZED AND KILLED!

NO! NO! THE CAPTAIN MAY BE RIGHT! THEY
COULD BE PIRATES! I'LL HELP RESCUE THEM!

WEDDO, HAVE YOU
LOST YOUR MIND?



DO NOT WORRY,
PANCHITA! I
KNOW WHAT
I AM DOING!



IS THERE ANYTHING I
CAN DO TO HELP
WITH THE CANNON?



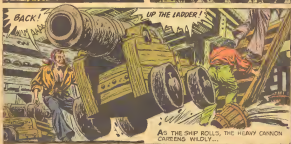
THE LINE IS
CUT!

WHAT? -- OH, HOW
CARELESS OF ME!



BACK!

UP THE LADDER!



AS THE SHIP ROLLS, THE HEAVY CANNON
CARRENS WILDLY...





WE ARE TAKING
THIS PASSENGER
AND HER ESCORT--

SO THEY ARE YOUR
FRIENDS? NOW FOR-
TUNATE THAT MY
LITTLE ACCIDENT
BELOW DELAYED
THE FIGHTING!



AS I SAID, CAPTAIN, I
HAVE GOOD REASON
FOR LEAVING YOUR
SHIP HERE!



YOUR CARGO IS SAFE--
AND THIS SHOULD
TAKE CARE OF ANY
INCONVENIENCE!



MOMENTS LATER...

WELCOME ABOARD--
YOUR MAJESTY!



DEED, DO
YOU SEE--

--YES, MINOTA! THE SECRET
IS OUT--AND THAT CAN ONLY
MEAN TROUBLE!

THAT NIGHT, FROM THE COAST OF SPAIN, A
COLORED LIGHT FLASHES..



WELL, WE HAVE
REACHED SPAIN..

BUT IT IS STILL A LONG
JOURNEY TO THE MOUNTAINS!



AT LEAST YOUR
FRIENDS ARE
MAKING THIS A
COMFORTABLE
ADVENTURE!

SI! I HAVE POWERFUL
FRIENDS--
AND EVEN
MORE POWER-
FUL ENEMIES!



WINDING ACROSS THE DARK ROADS, THE
COACH RACES ON UNTIL FINALLY...



I AM NOT AT LIBERTY
TO REVEAL THAT,
DON DIEGO!

WELL, IT IS A
FORMIDABLE
CASTLE! NO ONE
COULD BREAK INTO
IT EASILY--

OR GET OUT
OF IT
EASILY!



YOU AND YOUR SERGENT
WILL BE QUARTERED IN
THE GUEST HOUSE!



YOU ARE TO STAY THERE! FOOD
WILL BE BROUGHT TO YOU, DON
DREGO - I AM SORRY, BUT
NO ONE MUST SEE WHO
I MEET IN THE CASTLE!

BUT PANCHITA?



SHE WILL GO WITH ME, BUT REMAIN IN MY
SUITE! WE CANNOT RISK MY SUPPORTERS'
IDENTITY BECOMING KNOWN YET!



I QUITE
UNDERSTAND,
YOUR MAJESTY!

SHALL I LAY OUT
YOUR DINNER
CLOTHES -

--NO, BERNARDO!
THERE IS ANOTHER
I SHALL NEED
TONIGHT!



ZORRO!

WE SHALL SOON FIND OUT
WHOSE CASTLE THIS IS!











BUT ONLY THE ROYAL PHYSICIAN
EXAMINES THE KING AND HE IS ON
THE PLOT TO KILL HIM!



UNLESS TORRO CAN FIND A WAY
TO CHANGE THE ROYAL DIET!



NOW WHAT, DE RIEZ? ... MUST YOU ASK THE OBVIOUS,
SUGGEST BY TOMORROW, DON
DIEGO'S GRIEVING FAMILY WILL
BE ORDERING THE FINEST
FUNERAL CLOTHES FOR
THAT POORJAY!



MARIA BOURBON CERTAINLY ARRIVED
AT THE RIGHT MOMENT! ... A WEEK
MORE AND THE THRONE
WILL BE EMPTY!



SOON ... SI, EXCELLENCY, I FOLLOWED
HIM! HE WENT TO A CHEMIST'S
SHOP -- THEY WERE EXAMINING
AN APPLE!

YOU HAVE
DONE WELL!



THAT EVENING, AS BERNARDO STEPS OUT
OF THE GUEST HOUSE FOR A BREATH OF
AIR, SUDDENLY...





GOOD! BERNARDO
IS ALL RIGHT! -- I
NEED LOSE NO
TIME WITH HIM!



DID YOU--

--NO! HE STRUCK
ME DOWN!
RIDE!



NIGHT IS ALWAYS THE TIME FOR
CONSPIRATORS -- BUT THIS MAY BE
ONE CONSPIRACY THAT WILL NEVER
SEE THE LIGHT OF DAY!



SOON, THE FLEEING HORSESMEN END THEIR
RETREAT AT A NOBLEMAN'S COUNTRY HOUSE.

THIS IS WHAT I FOUND ON MY HAND
WHEN I REGAINED MY SENSES



THE MARK OF
BORRO! -- SO
THAT'S WHO
SAVED DON
DIEGO!

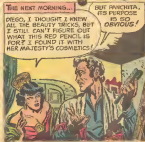


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SI, SEÑORS! BORRO --
AT YOUR SERVICE!







ADIOS, SEÑORS-- BUT DO NOT FANCY THIS TO BE OUR LAST MEETING!

HEY!

THIS LITTLE ADVENTURE DID ME NO GOOD! IT WILL ONLY FORCE THEIR HAND AND MAKE THEM MOVE ALL THE FASTER AGAINST THE KING!

THE NEXT MORNING...

BUT FANCITA, ITS PURPOSE IS SO OBVIOUS!

DIEGO, I THOUGHT I KNEW ALL THE BEAUTY TRICKS, BUT I STILL CAN'T FIGURE OUT WHAT THIS RED PENCIL IS FOR! I FOUND IT WITH HER MAJESTY'S COSMETICS!







WHEN I FIRST SAW THIS SMALL HOUSE BY THE SUMMER PALACE, I WONDERED WHY SUCH AN UGLY BUILDING WAS PLACED ON SUCH SPLENDID GROUNDS --



THE PLANS OF THE PALACE TOLD ME! SO THAT THERE COULD BE A SECRET TUNNEL FROM THE PALACE -- AND ONE THAT IF NEED BE, COULD EASILY BE FLOODED!



WATER!

IT'S FROM THE RIVER AND IT'S RISING FAST! TURN BACK!



PERFECT! ALL THE GUARDS LEFT THEIR POSTS -- THE WAY IS CLEAR!



YOUR MAJESTY--

--QUICKLY, BERNARDO! HELP HIS MAJESTY INTO THE COACH! THEN DRIVE TO THE HERBY MONASTERY! THERE, HE WILL BE SAFE!

LATER, AT THE CASTLE WHERE PANCHITA IS STAYING....

THE ANSWER IS SIMPLE 'WHO SAVED DON DIEGO FROM OUR ASSASSIN-- ZORRO! ZORRO MUST BE HIS CLOSE FRIEND AND DON DIEGO'S FIANCEE IS PANCHITA!'



WE KEEP HER CAPTIVE, UNDER MARIA'S GUARD-- HER LIFE IN EXCHANGE FOR THE KING'S! AND WHEN ZORRO, AT DON DIEGO'S REQUEST, HANDS THE KING OVER TO US FOR PANCHITA, WE KILL THE KING AND BLAME THE DEED ON ZORRO!



SHORTLY AFTER...

PLEASE! YOU ARE CREAMING MY CLOTHES!



PANCHITA IS OUR PRISONER! IF YOU WISH HER TO LIVE, TELL YOUR FRIEND ZORRO TO TURN OVER TO US A CERTAIN MAN WE REQUEST!

ZORRO! HOW WOULD I EVER CONTACT HIM?

THE SAME WAY YOU DID BEFORE-- WHEN HE CAME TO YOUR ROOM!



CAREFUL! THIS BOLT OF CLOTH STAINS EASILY!

THINK LESS OF YOUR CLOTH AND MORE OF YOUR FIANCEE'S LIFE! THEN I'M SURE YOU WILL FIND A WAY TO GET OUR MESSAGE TO ZORRO!



THE KING IS SAFE, BERNARDO-- BUT NOW PANCHITA NEEDS ZORRO'S HELP!



NO--THAT CASTLE CANNOT BE STORMED BY ANY ONE MAN! BUT IF I CANNOT RESCUE PANCHITA FROM THAT PLACE--THE THING TO DO IS TO MAKE THEM MOVE HER ELSEWHERE SO I CAN RESCUE HER ON THE WAY!



AND AS BERNARDO, UNDER GUARD, GOES FOR DON DIEGO'S SUPPER, HE SPREADS A RUMOR FROM SERVANT TO SERVANT...



TONIGHT, TAKE THE GOOD WINE FOR YOURSELVES! ZORRO COMES THIS NIGHT AND YOUR MASTERS MAY NOT BE AROUND BY MORNING!

AND SOON THE WHISPER THAT STARTED IN THE KITCHEN REACHES UPSTAIRS...

EVERYONE KNOWS IT, EXCELLENCY! ZORRO PLANS TO ATTACK THIS CASTLE TONIGHT! THEY SAY A HUNDRED MEN WILL BE WITH HIM!



DE RIEZ, WE'D BE FOOLS TO STAY HERE AND WAIT FOR HIM!

MINUTES LATER...

LET ZORRO COME! HE'LL FIND HIS PRIZE IS GONE!



I STILL SAY THIS CASTLE IS UNCONQUERABLE!

WHY TEST ZORRO'S SKILL? HE WILL GO WHERE HE WILL, NOT FIND US!



ONLY ONE GUARD-- ENOUGH TO KEEP DON DIEGO HERE, BUT NOT ZORRO!









LATER... IN THE MONASTERY...





GET READY! GET SET! GO GET...

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TH- THE OTHER
HALF OF MY
LOCKET! IT
HAS BEEN
MISSING FOR
MONTHS--

-- STOLEN, SIRE! AN EASY
THING FOR ONE OF YOUR
TRUSTED GENTLEMEN
OF THE CHAMBER--



SOMEONE IN ALTA CALIFORNIA, MUST HAVE BEEN
STRUCK BY HER AMAZING RESEMBLANCE TO
YOU! THAT INSPIRED THE PLOT! WHILE HIS
THREE CO-CONSPIRATORS HERE SLOWLY
POISONED YOU, HE PREPARED HER ORIENTALS
IN ALTA CALIFORNIA! SHE WAS TO ARRIVE JUST
BEFORE YOU DIED! WITH HER ON THE THRONE
--ALL SPAIN WOULD HAVE BEEN
AT THEIR MERCY!



WE WILL SOON LEARN
FROM THEM WHO THINK
AGENT WAS IN ALTA
CALIFORNIA! -- BUT
YOUR FRIEND DON DIEGO,
HE MUST BE BROUGHT
TO ME AT ONCE
AND REWARDED!



SIRE, I BEE- YOU
EXCUSE ME! I FEEL
MY PRESENCE WOULD
ONLY EMBARRASS
DON DIEGO!



LATER... WHAT A WONDERFUL JOKE ON
MAMBA! THE RIBBON SNAKE OFFERED
ME ON THE KING'S DEATH, HE GAVE
ME NOW!



AND I DON'T SEE WHY WE CAN'T BE
MARRIED HERE AS YOU PROMISED WHEN
YOU TALKED ME INTO LEAVING ALTA
CALIFORNIA!



BUT PANCHITA, FOR A
PALACE WEDDING, WE
WOULD HAVE TO WAIT
UNTIL HIS MAJESTY RE-
GAINS HIS HEALTH! AND
CERTAINLY, NEITHER OF
US WANTS TO POSTPONE
THIS WEDDING
ANY LONGER!

THE PY CEREAL!



the
happy way
to start
the day



THE HAPPY SNACK



New
fruit-flavor
fruit-**TRIX**

little sugared corn puffs
nourishing and crisp

